

Royal Mail International Update

May 2019

This update, about incidents which have affected international mail services throughout May, was issued by Royal Mail Customer Services on Thursday 6 June 2019.

Information about issues currently affecting the movement of international mail, including international bank holidays, can be found at: www.royalmail.com/internationalupdates.

Africa

Libya

Start date: 16 July 2014

End date: Ongoing

Mail services to Libya are currently suspended until further notice.

South Africa

Start date: 1 October 2017

End date: Ongoing

Very poor service has been observed for mail into South Africa. South Africa Post Office has advised this is due to abnormally high volumes of mail.

This has created bottlenecks in their processing locations due to space constraints and processing capacity. The communicated recovery plan expected at the end of October does not look to have resolved the issues and with the peak Christmas volumes, this is likely to increase delays. Delays are approximately 35 days.

Zimbabwe

Start date: 15 March 2019

End date: 17 May 2019

Cyclone Idai hit Zimbabwe on Friday 15 March. As a result, mail services were disrupted for some time in the following areas: Chimanimani, Chipinge, Biriiri, Birchenough, Nyanga, Nyazura and Rusitu.

Asia

Malaysia

Start date: 10 September 2018

End date: Ongoing

Due to a customs interface issue at Kuala Lumpur, there will be a 1-2 day delay for mail.



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Philippines

Start date: 23 April 2019

End date: 26 April 2019

Following a 6.1 earthquake in Castillejos, Zambales on 22 April, all postal operations were suspended for a few days in the following areas: Metro Manila and Pampanga provinces.

Philippines

Start date: 16 May 2019

End date: 20 May 2019

Philippine Post experienced major IT issues for a short time which delayed the processing of outgoing and incoming international mail.

Syria

Start date: 6 December 2012

End date: Ongoing

Mail services to Syria are currently suspended until further notice.

Australasia

No incidents reported.

Europe

Italy

Start date: 1 February 2017

End date: Ongoing

We have become aware of processing delays on all inbound international traffic arriving in Italy.

To reflect the current transit times, we are temporarily extending our delivery aims as follows:

Untracked products: 6-8 working days; Tracked products: 4-6 working days and Tracked and Signed For products: 5-7 working days.

Italy

Start date: 19 May 2019

End date: 25 May 2019

Essential maintenance work at a local airport starting on Sunday 19 May from 9:50pm until 6:00am up to Saturday 25 May, meant priority letter mail to the Sardinia Region (zip code from 07010 to 09199) was likely to face delays of up to 24hrs. Parcel traffic isn't affected.

Luxembourg

Start date: 9 May 2019

End date: 10 May 2019

Thursday 9 May was a national holiday in Luxembourg to celebrate Europe Day. All mail and parcels to Luxembourg was likely to have been delayed by 24 hours.

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Norway

Start date: 1 August 2018

End date: Ongoing

Norwegian Post has confirmed their International Mail Hub due is continuing to experience delays following modernisation.

Although there have been improvements, a proportion of Tracked mail is still experiencing delays daily. Norwegian Post has confirmed further enhancement activities are planned for processing improvements.

Norway, Sweden, Denmark

Start date: 26 April 2019

End date: 6 May 2019

On Friday 26 April a number of flights to and from Norway, Sweden and Denmark were cancelled as a result of a pilot strike. This strike action ended on the 3 May, however delays were expected for a few more days while any backlogs were cleared.

San Marino

Start date: 13 May 2019

End date: 28 May 2019

Strike action by Poste San Marino employees since Monday 13 May, resulted in delays in delivery of letters and parcels.

Sweden

Start date: November 2017

End date: Ongoing

Delivery scanning of 'Tracked' has improved in recent months, however it still isn't where it's expected to be and we'd recommend customers use Tracked & Signed services to Sweden for more reliable tracking information.

Ukraine (Crimea & Sevastapol)

Start date: 18 March 2014

End date: Ongoing

Mail services to Crimea and Sevastapol are suspended until further notice.

Latin America & Caribbean

Brazil

Start date: 16 October 2017

End date: Ongoing

We've been advised that there are currently delays with mail in to Brazil. We believe this may be due to industrial action, however this is yet to be confirmed. However, what we can say is that any mail posted in the last 5-7 days could be in a backlog and any mail affected may experience at least a 10 day delay from posting to delivery.

We are taking steps to re-route where possible and expect any new postings from the end of this week to be clear of the backlog, but could still be subject to some delay in delivery of 3 days or more.

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Jamaica

Start date: 14 May 2019

End date: 7 June 2019

The International Mail Processing Centre in Kingston has had to initiate an emergency shutdown of operations on 14 May, due to noxious fumes circulating inside. The centre reopened on the 21 May, however due to the backlog normal service wasn't expected to resume until 7 June.

Venezuela

Start date: 4 July 2017

End date: Ongoing

The local situation has disrupted mail flows into Venezuela and our supplier has had to stop delivering mail in to Venezuela. As a result, we can no longer accept any mail for Venezuela, any mail on hand will be returned to sender.

We don't know when the situation will change, but we will look for alternative ways of getting mail in to Venezuela.

Middle East

Iran

Start date: 9 April 2019

End date: 31 May 2019

Due to operational issues, we were unable to deliver to Iran for over a month. We continued to accept mail and normal service was restored on the 31 May.

Israel

Start date: 4 May 2019

End date: 13 May 2019

Following a security issue, there were delays to the delivery and collection of mail in the south of Israel for a few days.

Lebanon

Start date: 17 May 2019

End date: 23 May 2019

Workers responsible for mail clearance took strike action from the 17-23 May. As a result, inbound and outbound mail experienced delays.

Yemen

Start date: 27 March 2015

End date: Ongoing

Mail services to Yemen are currently suspended until further notice.

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North America (USA & Canada)

Canada

Start date: 9 October 2017

End date: Ongoing

What's the issue?

Canada Post are experiencing delays to delivery services due to high volumes of incoming mail. Delivery aims for Royal Mail services for Canada are normally 5-7 working day, however, International Standard and International Tracked & Signed are severely delayed, taking 3-4 weeks to be delivered.

What alternative is there?

If you have been posting using our Royal Mail 'Tracked and Signed service', we highly recommend you use our 'Tracked service' option which is providing much speedier processing and delivery times. Simply select the correct service and label. If you are not set up on our Tracked service, please talk to your usual Royal Mail contact who will help you with the next steps. Finally for our Customers using the Post Office to send your items, simply ask for a "Tracked service" at the counter.

A note about Customs in Canada

Whilst Customs clearing processing times are totally outside our control, it is worth remembering that Canada is one the countries with the lowest de-minimis of 20 Canadian Dollars (circa £11). This means that any goods equal or above that value will systematically go through a clearance process thus creating additional delays. Most of what our customers send is under DDU (Delivered Duty Unpaid) meaning that the recipient is responsible to pay any duty or taxes. Read more on our country guide page royalmail.com/canada, thank you.

Canada

Start date: 22 April 2019

End date: Ongoing

Severe flooding has affected the Northern and Eastern Ontario and Quebec regions, making some roads impassable and causing disruption to delivery operations within these regions.

Delays to mail services in the above regions are likely until conditions improve.

Other

Ascension Islands/Saint Helena

Start date: 6 February 2018

End date: Ongoing

Air transportation to the Ascension Islands/St Helena is currently reduced due to ongoing runway work. Unfortunately, given the location of the countries, there is no viable alternative which would arrive any earlier.

Although, customers can continue to send mail there will be significant delays in the delivery of all products. Please note: Mail to the Falkland Island is not affected.

Help and advice

More information about Royal Mail's international products and services is available on our royalmail.com/international_pages. Alternatively, if you're a business customer you can contact your usual Royal Mail service contact or call our dedicated Business Centre on 08457 950950. If you're a residential customer, you'll need to call 03457 740740.

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